

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L USNATO 1847

SECDEF FOR OASD(C3I)

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ETEL, MARR, NATO
SUBJECT: SPECIFICATIONS FOR DIGITAL LINE-OF-SIGHT (LOS)
RADIO SYSTEMS

SUMMARY: NICSMA HAS ASSERTED THAT A DIGITAL SOLUTION FOR THE NORTHWOOD - OAKHANGER RADIO SYSTEM RUNS SOME RISKS. NICSMA HAS ALSO IDENTIFIED SEVERAL ACTIONS IT CONSIDERS NECESSARY BEFORE IT CAN ISSUE DIGITAL SPECIFICATIONS. WE BELIEVE US EXPERTISE CAN ASSIST NICSMA GREATLY IN OVERCOMING STATED PROBLEMS. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON AUTHORIZE RELEASE TO NICSMA OF CERTAIN DIGITAL SYSTEM SPECIFICATIONS AND AUTHORIZE DCA PERSONNEL TO ASSIST NICSMA. END SUMMARY.

1. ON MARCH 23, 1977 NICSMA REPS MADE A STATEMENT TO INFRASTRUCTURE WRKING GROUP 18 REGARDING DIGITALIZATION OF THE OAKHANGER - NORTHWOOD LOS LINK. THE STATEMENT, CONFIDENTIAL

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INTER ALIA, LISTED ACTIONS WHICH NICSMA MUST TAKE, AS FOLLOWS:
A. DEFINE OVERALL DIGITAL STANDARDS FOR NICS TRANSMISSION SYSTEMS.
B. EXAMINE ORDERWIRE PHILOSOPHY TO DEFINE PROCEDURES AND ELECTRICAL INTERFACES BETWEEN MULTIPLEXERS, CRYPTO, AND MODEMS.
C. WRITE TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS FOR THE RADIO EQUIPMENT AND FOR THE DIGITAL MULTIPLEX EQUIPMENT.

2. THE NICSMA REPS CONTENDED THAT A DIGITAL SOLUTION HAS RISKS. NICSMA CANNOT PREPARE DIGITAL MULTIPLEX SPECIFICATIONS UNTIL

IT HAS DEFINED THE OVERALL DIGITAL STANDARDS AND DEVELOPED ITS ORDERWIRE PHILOSOPHY. THE TIME REQUIRED FOR THESE ACTIONS COULD DELAY THE NORTHWOOD - OAKHANGER LOS PROJECT WELL BEYOND THE REQUIRED OPERATIONAL DATE. FURTHER, IF NICSMA PROCEEDED WITHOUT FIRST TAKING THESE ACTIONS, THE PROCURED DIGITAL SYSTEM MAY NOT BE TOTALLY COMPATIBLE WITH EQUIPMENT PROCURED AFTER DIGITAL STANDARDS AND THE ORDERWIRE PHILOSOPHY ARE KNOWN.

3. SEVERAL MEMBERS OF WG 18, LED BY THE US AND CANADIAN MEMBERS, VERY STRONGLY OBJECTED TO THE NICSMA POSITION. THEY ARGUED THAT NICSMA COULD SAFELY USE EXISTING EUROPEAN DIGITAL STANDARDS AND THAT SEVERAL ALLIED NATIONS WHICH HAVE INSTALLED DIGITAL SYSTEMS COULD ADVISE NICSMA ON THE OTHER ASPECTS. IN SUBSEQUENT DISCUSSIONS WITH NICSMA REPS, WE LEARNED THAT NICSMA HAS NOT YET SOUGHT OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE. WE BELIEVE THAT THE US, THROUGH EXPERIENCE GAINED IN THE DIGITAL EUROPEAN BACKBONE (DEB) PROJECT, CAN PROVIDE GREAT HELP TO NICSMA.

4. WE RECOMMEND THAT, IF POSSIBLE, THE US PROVIDE NICSMA WITH COPIES OF THE TECHNICAL SPECIFICATIONS AND WITH PERTINENT IMPLEMENTATION AND INSTALLATION PLANS FOR THE DEB SYSTEM. FURTHER, WE RECOMMEND THAT KNOWLEDGEABLE DCA-EUR OPERATIONS AND ENGINEERING PERSONNEL (AUGMENTED BY DCA WASHINGTON PERSONNEL IF NECESSARY) MEET WITH NICSMA PERSONNEL TO ASSIST IN THEIR GENERAL EDUCATION ON PLANNING, ENGINEERING AND IMPLEMENTING DIGITAL TRANSMISSION SYSTEMS.

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IN PARTICULAR, WE BELIEVE THAT THE US EXPERTS COULD ELIMINATE CONCERN SOME NICSMA PERSONNEL HAVE REGARDING ORDERWIRES IN A BULK-ENCRYPTED SYSTEM. THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL NICSMA CONCURS IN OUR RECOMMENDATIONS.

5. FYI: THE OAKHANGER - NORTHWOOD LOS SYSTEM WILL OPERATE IN THE 4.4-TO-5 GHZ FREQUENCY BAND. IN AN INFORMAL INDUSTRY SURVEY BY NICSMA, FIVE FIRMS RESPONDED AS BEING CAPABLE OF OFFERING DIGITAL SYSTEMS OPERATING IN THIS BAND. END FYI.

6. REQUEST WASHINGTON AUTHORIZE RELEASE OF DEB SPECIFICATIONS AND AUTHORIZE THE RECOMMENDED ASSISTANCE BY DCA. IF APPROVED, THESE ASSISTANCE ACTIONS COULD BE CHANNELED TO NICSMA THROUGH THE DEFENCE COMMUNICATIONS FIELD OFFICE STRAUSZ-HUPE

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